

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

WHITE HOUSE IMMEDIATE 0085

S E C R E T STATE 084638 TOSEC 030174

NODIS

CHEROKEE

FOR THE SECRETARY VIA FRANK WISNER, WHITE HOUSE FOR DR BRZEZINSKI
ONLY

FOLLOWING REPEAT LONDON 5122 ACTION STATE APR 1.

QUOTES E C R E T LONDON 05122

NODIS CHEROKEE

DEPT PASS PRESIDENT'S PARTY

EYES ONLY FOR THE SECRETARY FROM AMBASSADOR BREWSTER

DEPT FOR TARNOFF

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: NATO UK

SUBJECT: MEETING WITH UK FOREIGN SECRETARY OWEN

1. WARREN CHRISTOPHER HAS ASKED ME TO GIVE YOU MY
IMPRESSIONS OF REACTIONS OF DAVID OWEN AND MICHAEL

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PALLISER (INCLUDED AT SPECIFIC REQUEST OF OWEN) TO
CHRISTOPHER'S MESSAGE ON ERW.

2. LEAVING SYMPATHETIC OPINIONS ON THE MERITS AND
DEFERENCE TO PRESIDENTIAL PREROGATIVE TO ONE SIDE, BOTH
WERE UTTERLY CANDID IN DESIRE TO BE HELPFUL. EVEN DIS-
COUNTING BRITISH MANNERS AND UNDERSTATEMENT, BOTH

UNDERScored THE DISASTROUS IMPACT THE DECISION WILL HAVE ON THE PRESIDENT'S CREDIBILITY AND HENCE LEADERSHIP IN THE WESTERN WORLD. THIS CAN BE MITIGATED BY THE FORM OF PRESENTATION; BUT BECAUSE OF HAVING ASKED ALLIES TO MARCH UP THE HILL AND NOW DOWN AGAIN, CREDIBILITY WILL STILL BE DAMAGED NO MATTER HOW WELL THE PUBLIC FORMULATION IS HANDLED.

3. DAVID OWEN'S CONCERN WAS TO SOMEHOW LINK DECISION TO REASSURANCE TO EUROPE THAT THE PRESIDENT WAS STILL BENT ON ACHIEVING RAPPROCHEMENT WITH THE RUSSIANS; DESIRE TO MOVE MBFR TO THE POLITICAL LEVEL; AND POSSIBILITY OF A CARTER-BREZHNEV SUMMIT.

4. PALLISER WAS WORRIED ABOUT ALMOST UNANIMOUS SUPPORT FOR ERW BY THE NATO AND NATIONAL MILITARY ESTABLISHMENTS AND THE IMPORTANCE OF AVOIDING OR AT LEAST MINIMIZING AUDIBLE MILITARY GRUMBLING.

5. ALL AGREED THAT IT WOULD BE IMPORTANT FOR THE PRESIDENT TO SPELL IT ALL OUT AS FULLY AND HONESTLY AS POSSIBLE, MAKING IT CLEAR THAT HE HAD EARLIER-ON FAVORED PRODUCTION AND DEPLOYMENT, BUT IN VIEW OF HIS HOPES FOR MBFR AND THE AVAILABILITY OF OTHER WAYS OF STRENGTHENING TACTICAL DETERRENTS THIS WAS NOT THE TIME TO DO IT. DAVID ESPECIALLY SEEMED TO THINK IT MIGHT EASE THE
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IMPACT IF THE DECISION DID NOT SEEM FINAL AND IRREVERSIBLE, BUT WAS LINKED TO HOPEFUL SIGNS ON STRATEGIC AND TACTICAL ARMS CONTROL.

6. IT WAS APPARENT THAT WITH EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS AND OPINION THE PROBLEM IS THE UNCERTAIN TRUMPET, THE BACKING AND FILLING, EVEN MORE THAN THE MERITS OF THE DECISION. IN THE UNITED STATES, THE PROBLEM TAKES THE FORM OF STRENGTHENING THE CRITICAL VOICE OF THE HAWKS.

7. ALL AGREED TO PONDER FURTHER THE MODE OF PUBLIC PRESENTATION AND WERE ENCOURAGED TO SUBMIT ANY ADVICE PROMPTLY AND IN MOST STRICT CONFIDENCE. I EXPECT YOU WILL HEAR FROM DAVID PERSONALLY NOT WITH ANY DOGMATIC RECOMMENDATION BUT LAYING OUT THE PROS AND CONS AS HE SEES THEM ON DIFFERENT EMPHASES WHICH MIGHT BE CONSIDERE

8. NEEDLESS TO SAY CHRIS WAS VERY WELL RECEIVED AND THE WHOLE TONE OF MEETING WAS EFFORT TO BE HELPFUL BY BEING CANDID. BREWSTER UNQUOTE COOPER

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